

Compilation of Resident comments received regarding Environmental Assessment (EA) scoping for the HOV/Transit Ramp at I-395 and Seminary Road.

Date: Sat, 27 Aug 2011 12:05:43 -0400

Subject: VDOT Sept. 7 comments

From: carolyn.griglione@gmail.com

To: gmgoodale@hotmail.com

CC: shirleydowns@verizon.net

8.27.2011

Dear Geoff,

I have the following comments I would like addressed at the VDOT EA Meeting on Sept. 7, 2011.

1. I am concerned about the statement in the message that states, The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is developing plans to construct a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) /Transit Ramp at the I-395/Seminary Road Interchange for the purpose of providing adequate transit and HOV access to the Mark Center and nearby employment centers, and to relieve forecasted peak traffic congestion at specific interchange ramps. The project also will include the widening of the Seminary Road Bridge and approaches on the third level bridge along Seminary Road as well as the introduction of a traffic signal at the intersection where the ramp ties to the widened bridge. In conjunction with the referenced project, a study will evaluate the turning movements from the HOV ramp onto Seminary Road.

I may be slow on the uptake but at all of the BRAC meetings I attended I did not hear mentioned that the upper level would be 'widened'. I did hear that the on and off ramps along I-395 would be widened. I did hear that where the ramp attached to the upper level there would be an intersection with lights and that the median would be cut through for the left turn.

I have been told by Rich Baier that the Advisory Group had this information and approved Alt. F which included the widening of the upper level. I do not understand the need for the widening. It appears to me that the ramp can attach to the upper level and with the intersection the left turn can then be made. There are two lanes that run east and two that run west. This is plenty wide to accommodate turning buses and shuttle vans.

Why is the widening needed and where will the new lanes lead? Will this allow for a 'merge' lane that ends abruptly and people then need to merge into the other two lanes of traffic. This situation is throughout our area and only leads to road rage when 'cheaters' get in those lanes to

not have to wait their turn in traffic. Other parts of the country do not have these lanes. These lanes have been a wonder to me since I moved here in 1972. They are ineffective. I do not let the cheaters merge. They can get in line and wait like everyone else. If only two lanes each way are available this 'merge' situation is not an issue.

2. What data is being used to create the EA? Is this data being newly collected or is data from previous evaluations being used? If 'old'/previous data is being used is this why the contractor feels they can have an answer by the end of September? Are they using HOT Lanes data from a few years ago?

3. Has VDOT done a cost/benefit analysis for building the ramp? What are the results? Have they been distributed?

4. What will determine which of the three options is selected for the ramp? Will the need for a another exit to relieve traffic congestion from I-395 be part of the data used to impact the decision? VDOT has been wanting this for years and I feel they now see this as their chance to make it happen by offering up the ramp option. Right turn from the ramp onto Seminary Rd. should not be an option. What purpose would it serve for BRAC-133? BRAC-133 is left of where the ramp would be constructed. The ramp is an invitation for drivers to use the HOV lanes and drive through Alexandria to other destinations. We would become nothing but a cut through city.

5. I know the City has sent a letter to VDOT expressing their objection to HOT Lanes extending further north than Edsal Rd. I want to hear from VDOT how the possiblilty of HOT Lanes coming to the ramp area play into the EA. Fairfax would like to see this happen.

6. What plans for a sound barrier at the ramp are part of the EA?

If you have questions about my comments please contact me.

Carolyn Griglione
703 370-0653

9.8.2011

Dear David,

Following are comments I previously sent to Geoff Goodale. I had sent them in two different messages which is the reason for the numbering. Please let me know if you receive this message.

Carolyn Griglione

1. What is the possibility of a left turn from west bound Seminary Rd. onto the ramp going south during PM rush hour? What would be the need for this? How would this help with BRAC traffic? Would a left turn lane from west bound Seminary Rd onto the ramp south bound be needed?
2. How many lanes are planned for the ramp? I have read 'one reversible lane'. Is this written in stone? What determines the number of lanes?
3. I would like the purpose for the ramp clearly stated and discussed. The previous stated purpose was to help with BRAC traffic. BRAC-133 is west of the ramp. Anything road changes dealing with traffic east of the ramp need to be taken off the table. In fact the ramp and intersection could cause problems for traffic coming from the east going west over the upper level.
4. We need a timeline chart for all parts of the EA.
5. We need to know if the ramp will be open during AM and PM rush hours only or continually. Weekdays, weekends??

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widening. It appears to me that the ramp can attach to the upper level and with the intersection the left turn can then be made. There are two lanes that run east and two that run west. This is plenty wide to accommodate turning buses and shuttle vans.

Why is the widening needed and where will the new lanes lead? Will this allow for a 'merge' lane that ends abruptly and people then need to merge into the other two lanes of traffic. This situation is throughout our area and only leads to road rage when 'cheaters' get in those lanes to not have to wait their turn in traffic. Other parts of the country do not have these lanes. These lanes have been a wonder to me since I moved here in 1972. They are ineffective. I do not let the cheaters merge. They can get in line and wait like everyone else. If only two lanes each way are available this 'merge' situation is not an issue.

2. What data is being used to create the EA? Is this data being newly collected or is data from previous evaluations being used? If 'old'/previous data is being used is this why the contractor feels they can have an answer by the end of September? Are they using HOT Lanes data from a few years ago?

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5. I know the City has sent a letter to VDOT expressing their objection to HOT Lanes extending further north than Edsal Rd. I want to hear from VDOT how the possibility of HOT Lanes coming to the ramp area play into the EA. Fairfax would like to see this happen.

6. What plans for a sound barrier at the ramp are part of the EA?

Closing comments.

What happens when/if the ramp is built and it does not solve the projected problems and quite possibly causes additional problems? Who is responsible to pay to fix the newly created problems? Will those who did the EA be willing to stand up and say the EA did not perform as planned and created additional problems? Who is held accountable when/if the EA is dead wrong? I have no doubt that credit will be taken if it helps the situation. We have to have

assurances that when all of the studies done for the EA are used to select one of the three alternatives and that alternative does not perform as planned that a 'corrective' plan (Plan B) is in the ready to put into action. What would be done with a ramp that causes more problems than it fixes?

I surly hope that this is not a power struggle. I would hope our Governor and Transportation Secretary have more ethical and moral fiber than to play that game. Why can the \$80M only be used for this particular ramp? Who made this decision and what facts were used to make this decision? Decisions need to have flexibility.

I would like those making the decisions for this project (as well as other projects) to look at it from the viewpoint of themselves living along Van Dorn St. facing the ramp or living in abutting neighborhoods that will experience increased cut through traffic. Would they find the 'data' valuable and correct enough to support such a ramp? Empathy goes a long way. We must never forget, 'what goes around, comes around'.

If you have questions about my comments please contact me.

Carolyn Griglione
703 370-0653

From: Dave Cavanaugh <dacaval@yahoo.com>

To: Peter Carson <pdacarson@comcast.net>; Beth Chase <BChase@ssas.org>; Joanne Lepanto <JLepanto@bostonpacific.com>; Ann Henshaw <rmh-amh@comcast.net>

Sent: Sunday, September 4, 2011 5:38 PM

Subject: SRCA/BRAC Group: September 7 Meeting

This is a follow-up to our earlier meeting.

I checked FHWA guidance regarding EAs. There is no requirement for a public scoping meeting when preparing an EA. It is discretionary.

The City Council on February 22, 2011 did unanimously endorsed the categorical exclusion and stated its opposition to VDOT regarding the eastbound Seminary Road movement off the HOV ramp and asked that it be eliminated from the project.

The scope of this project consists of a proposed reversible single-lane HOV ramp extending from the I-395 HOV lanes to the third level interchange bridge carrying Seminary Road over I-395. The proposal includes a traffic signal at the intersection with the HOV ramp and the widened Seminary Road. They will be conducting a study to evaluate turning movements from the HOV ramp onto Seminary. They also will be evaluating the need for pedestrian bridges. The expected alternatives to be carried forward include:\

- i. No-build
- ii. I-395 HOV Ramp with left turn only at Seminary Road
- iii. I-395 HOV Ramp with full access at Seminary Road

I suggest four questions:

1. Does VDOT plan to conduct a traffic impact analysis on nearby intersections--Kenmore, Pickett, Jordan, Howard--as part of the EA?
2. The proposed ramp will have a steep grade to reach the third level. Will the Environmental Assessment include mitigation of storm water into existing holding ponds and basins? *There is no reference to storm water management in the Scope of Service Summary.*
3. What traffic management techniques will be evaluated in the EA to deter east bound traffic during the AM hours from the ramp onto Seminary or west bound traffic on Seminary using the ramp during the PM hours?
4. If anticipated noise levels exceed acceptable levels, will the EA explore various measures to mitigate noise levels.

VDOT has asked the City to respond to "General Questions--three of which are listed below. Hopefully the City will reference opposition to any increase in east bound traffic and the February 22 City Council resolution. They should also raise the concern of the potential for "cut-through traffic" through an area of established residential development, schools, and a hospital. We are already experiencing increased traffic on east bound Seminary Road and Quaker Lane in both the AM and PM rush hours. There is also opposition from owners of townhouses along Van Dorn who have concerns regarding noise and visual impacts.

1. Do you anticipate or are you aware of any organized opposition to the proposed project?
2. Are you aware of any disproportionately high and adverse effects to minorities or low income populations that could result from this project?
3. Will the project disrupt a community or its planned development?

It is my recollection VDOT had agreed to an expanded traffic study that included other nearby intersections--Jordan, Howard(?). I was not able to find any reference on the City web site regarding any letter or response to a request for an expanded traffic study. It could be part of the study of "turning movements".

Dave Cavanaugh

To: Members of the BRAC Advisory Committee, VDOT, City Council and Other Elected Officials

Re: The BRAC Advisory Group Meeting September 7, 2011 at 7 PM, in the West End Community Development Room on the 2nd level of Landmark Mall On the Environmental Assessment (EA) of the VA Department of Transportation (VDOT) Relating to the Proposed HOV Ramp at 395 and Seminary Road and the Proposed Scope and Purpose and Needs Statement for this Project

From: Shirley Downs Resident KMS Townhomes and other Residents On The Van Dorn Side

1007 North Vail Street

Alexandria, VA 22304

Phone: 703-845-7958

E-mail: shirleydowns@verizon.net

As residents near the area of the proposed ramp we are deeply concerned about the impact of the proposed HOV ramp at Seminary Road. BRAC 133 is located at the end of what is known as the Beauregard Corridor at Beauregard and Seminary. The City and State have been in favor of putting in an HOV ramp into BRAC 133 from 395 and have been trying to fast track this effort, limit the time for the Environmental Assessment, and the opportunity for input from citizens.

Our concerns include:

- The ramp, which will come up 395 to the top lane of Seminary, only addresses a portion of the traffic coming from the South and does not address the preponderance of other traffic coming from the East, West and North.
- The numerous intersections that will be impacted. These include those at 395 and Duke, Seminary, King and Glebe. But others include: Little River Turnpike and Beauregard; Little River and Braddock; Duke and Van Dorn; Sanger/Richenbacher and Van Dorn; Braddock and Van Dorn; Seminary and Kenmore; Seminary and North Pickett; Seminary and North Howard; Seminary and Quaker; and Duke and Quaker. All of these intersections are going to experience increases in traffic and should be studied and monitored. This is part of the environmental impact of BRAC in our area. What effect will the proposed ramp have on these areas?

- There is likely to be an increase in cut-through traffic both from the East and West. Streets such as Richenbacher, Taney, Pickett, Pegram and Morgan are all going to experience increases in cut through traffic. These also need to be studied and monitored.
- Many people at the last BRAC Advisory Committee Meeting to discuss the EA indicated that they favor putting the proposed funds toward mass transit instead of the ramp. The state has done everything it can to thwart the views of residents regarding this option. Since both State and Federal funds as well as local funds come from our taxes we very much believe that VDOT should do a comparative cost/benefit analysis on the mass transit, and ramp options to determine which modality will be the most beneficial in terms of initial cost, long-term maintenance, and how rapidly, and how many people can be moved into the Mark Center and the Beauregard Corridor.
- There has been no discussion of the impact of the proposed ramp on the homeowners on the Van Dorn Side of the ramp. The state has indicated that the ramp will start at Sanger and will gradually rise over 30 feet in the air to the middle of Seminary. Further, the State has indicated that they will have to remove the hillock and trees between 395 and Van Dorn. Looking at something that looks like the Southwest Freeway in DC or the “Mixing Bowl “ in Springfield is not going to enhance the property values of the residents all along Van Dorn. This is really pouring salt in the wound of selecting the BRAC site in the first place. We do not want to view traffic on 395 or a huge ugly sound barrier wall. We prefer to view the hillock and trees to the ramp site.
- A study should be conducted of impact on our quality of life and the negative economic impact the proposed ramp will have on the property values of the residents on the Van Dorn Side of 395. We also suggest that the diminution of our property taxes due to the decreased value of our homes will have a negative impact on the revenues coming to the City. This will compound the loss of the \$60 million in lost tax revenue for Alexandria because BRAC is federal property. We have also lost revenue because DOD refuses to require that BRAC employees pay for parking in the parking spaces provided in the building. It should be noted that while most of the rest of Alexandria has held even or has somewhat increased its property values, our area here in the West End has experienced a diminution of property values since the BRAC building was erected. The ramp will make it worse.
- We also suggest that the State provide residents with maps that indicate the current width of the area occupied by the hillock and trees from Sanger up to Seminary and the amount of land and trees that the state plans to remove for this project and that this information be given to all residents living adjacent to Van Dorn as well as local civic and community groups. We also request that this information be published on the City and VDOT websites, in newspapers, blogs, on television and radio well in advance of the proposed December public hearing. We do not want maps and renderings that only show the ramp from above. We want side views of the proposed ramp so that residents will see what their view will be like of 395 and the ramp. We want these views from the vantagepoint of the residents of Van Dorn from Sanger and Richenbacher up to Seminary so that the residents of the KMS Townhomes, Hollandtowne at Brookside, Parkside at Alexandria, Seminary Towers and Alexandria Overlook will be able to view the impact. We deserve to know well ahead of time what the impact of the planned ramp will be on us.

Recommendations:

- 1) Study and monitor the effect that the proposed ramp or mass transit improvements will have on all the intersections referenced above both on 395 and on other streets.
- 2) Study and monitor the impact of the proposals on diminishing cut-through traffic.
- 3) A study of the effect of building the ramp on quality of life and the property values of the residents living on and near the ramp on the Van Dorn side and the consequent loss of tax revenues for the City.
- 4) Provision of maps and side views of the impact of the proposed ramp from several locations along Van Dorn from Sanger/Richenbacher up to Seminary so that local residents can observe what will happen to their views. This information needs to be provided well in advance of the December public hearings and be readily available in the manner described above.
- 5) Conduct a cost/benefit analysis, which compares initial construction costs, long-term maintenance, and how quickly and how many people would be able to get into Mark Center and the Beauregard Corridor with the ramp or mass transit options.

The following petition with resident signatures was attached to the above.

Comments from the Residents From the Van Dorn Side of 395 Relating to the Proposed Ramp at 395 and Seminary.

Print Name	Sign Name	Address	Email
David Eyzel	David Eyzel	1005 N Vail St	dseygel@verizon.net
Kathleen C. McDonough	Kathleen C. McDonough	1014 N. VAIL ST.	Kcmcdonough@comcast
Jamali Ward	Wafa Nasz waf	5443 Richenbacher Ave.	
Grace Davis	Grace Davis	5445 Richenbacher Ave.	accounts2010@gmail.com
INGRID TOMASEK	INGRID TOMASEK	1003 N. VAN DORN	gmm@comcast.net
JOSEF TOMASEK	JOSEF TOMASEK	5468 BARRISTER PLACE, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22304	joetomasek@aol.com
EMEBET MIKAEL	EMEBET MIKAEL	5418 Barrister Pl	Alexandria VA 22304
Mark Austin	Mark Austin	5446 Barrister Pl Alex, VA 22304	andres.maucini@comcast.net
Andrés Maucini	Andrés Maucini	5419 Barrister Pl, Alex VA	katieblakesley@gmail.com
Katie Blakesley	Katie Blakesley	1000 N Vail St, Alex VA 22304	cjcomm@comcast.net
Carol L James	Carol L James	1000 N Vail St, Alexandria 22304	moss@comcast.net
Michael Moss	Michael Moss	1000 N Vail St, Alexandria 22304	moss@comcast.net
LARA SANFORD	Lara Sanford	1003 N Vail St 22304	
ROBERT M. WEBB	Robert M. Webb	5425 RICHENBACHER AVE, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22304	robertwebb@comcast.net
Greg Rice	Greg Rice	5413 Richenbacher Alexandria VA	greg@bmsi.com
Debra Goldstein	Debra Goldstein	1003 N Terrill, Alex VA	debragold@aol.com
Art Davis	Art Davis	1015 N TERRILL ALEX VA	emerald@comcast.net
Christy Davis	Christy Davis	1015 N Terrill St. Alex VA	chrsdavis@comcast.net
Michael Williams	Michael Williams	1012 N Terrill St Alex VA	mbw12@aol.com

Comments from the Residents From the Van Dorn Side of 395 Relating to the Proposed Ramp at 395 and Seminary.

Print Name	Sign Name	Address	Email
Patrick Young	<i>[Signature]</i>	1004 N. Van Dorn / 1013 N. Vail	Young, Patrick @ Yahoo.com → JANNRoberts@1230@yahoo
Jeanette S Robertson	<i>[Signature]</i>		
Shirley Downs	Shirley Downs	1007 North Vail	Shirley Downs @ Verizon.net
James D. Mercer	<i>[Signature]</i>	5429 Rickenbacker	
Elizabeth Mercer	<i>[Signature]</i>		
Cornelia A. Harris	<i>[Signature]</i>	5427 Rickenbacker	caharris @verizon.net
Melanie L. Engelen	Melanie L. Engelen	1005 N. Vail St.	dessey@verizon.net
DIANE L PERCHOWICK	<i>[Signature]</i>	1006 N. VAIL ST 5439 Rickenbacker Ave	
Charlotte M. Ross	Charlotte M. Ross		
Taylor Davis	<i>[Signature]</i>	5441 Rickenbacker Ave	taylor@clarkson.net
Loel Lataillade	<i>[Signature]</i>	1001 N. Van Dorn St	lataillade@comcast.net
NICOLAS LATAILLADE	<i>[Signature]</i>	1001 N. VAN DORN ST	lataillade@comcast.net
Norka Antelo	<i>[Signature]</i>	1009 N. Van Dorn St	nkantelo@yahoo.com
Valeria Antelo	<i>[Signature]</i>	1009 N Van Dorn St.	valeria_gzorn@gatecom
Tabitha Perry	<i>[Signature]</i>	5426 Barrister Place	tabitha_perry@uss.salvadorarmy.org
James Reed	<i>[Signature]</i>	5434 Barrister Pl.	
Cindy Key	Cindy Key	5450 Barrister Pl	
Kathleen Tes	Kathleen Tes	5454 Barrister Pl	Ktes1@felic.gov

Comments from the Residents From the Van Dorn Side of 395 Relating to the Proposed Ramp at 395 and Seminary.

Print Name	Sign Name	Address	Email
Dana Purdy (H) 571-970-1355	Dana Purdy	5403 Barrister Place	orkney22000 @yahoo.com
JEFF CLARKE Verona Nolan	JEFF CLARKE VN	1011 N. VAN DORN Alexandria VA 22304 1002 N. Vail St	JCLARKE9 at comcast.net 4Vanolan@gmail.com
SENA YU	SENA YU	5401 WYCKLOW ST.	seena.yu@gmail.com
Maricela Donahue Alecia R. Watson	Maricela Donahue Alecia R. Watson	1381 N. Van Dorn St 1391 N. Van Dorn St	maricela.donahue@gmail.com alecia.watson@comcast.net
Laura Filas Lindsay Otto	Laura Filas Lindsay Otto	1357 N. Van Dorn St 1357 N. Van Dorn St	l.filas@ix.com LindsayOtto@gmail.com
Evan McLaughlin Krystle McLaughlin	Evan McLaughlin Krystle McLaughlin	1359 N Van Dorn St "	evan.mclaughlin@gmail.com "
Alberto Abasceid M. Afanador	Alberto Abasceid Maria Afanador	1361 N. Van Dorn St "	abasceid55@yahoo.com "
John Aglieco	JOHN AGLIECO	1012 N. VAIL ST	JOHNASTUFF@attman.com
RICHARD W. BURRIS KATHLEEN M. BURNS	RICHARD W. BURRIS Kathleen M Burns	1009 N. VAIL ST 1036 N. PELHAM ST	r.w.burris@verizon.net BURNSKATHY@EARTHLINK.net
Juan M. Vilas Mairym Ramos	Juan M. Vilas Mairym Ramos	5437 Richbader Ave 5433 Richbader Ave	vilarj@seiv.org mairym.ramos@seiv.org
Wes Hickman	Wes Hickman	1005 N. Van Dorn St.	weshickman99@gmail.com

Comments from the Residents From the Van Dorn Side of 395 Relating to the Proposed Ramp at 395 and Seminary.

Print Name	Sign Name	Address	Email
Bridget Heekin	Bridget Heekin	5431 Barrister Pl. Alex. VA 22304	bheekin400msn@msn.com
Jan Owa	Jan OVALLE	5427 Barrister Pl ALEXANDRIA, VA, 22304	
Joyce Mayo	Joyce Mayo	5440 Barrister Pl Alexandria, VA 22304	
Sheila Bades	Sheila Bades	5417 Barrister Place Alexandria, VA	
Kerry R.	Kerry Birmingham	1365 N. Van Dorn Alex VA 22304	
Tracy D. Drynan	Tracy Drynan	5280 Maris An Alexandria, VA 22304	
Todd Whittier	Todd Whittier	5280 MARIS ALEXANDRIA, VA 22304	

Received from Don Buch September 6, 2011

Community Concerns and Questions

Relating to Planned VDOT Undertakings on I-395

1. Concern: EA Process issues.

Questions:

- a) How long should an EA take? How did a repeatedly-asserted 12-14 months suddenly shrink to 2 ½ months? What is being expedited, why and with what possible ramifications to the EA product and, ultimately, to the community?
- b) Please explain what common NEPA considerations will be included within the scope of this EA and which ones are specifically not being addressed, irrespective of VDOT's justification for doing so.
- c) Please explain the NEPA requirements with respect to the "scoping" process. To what extent will/won't the public be involved and when?
- d) Please explain the NEPA requirements relating to the Purpose and Need assessment. To what extent will/won't the public be involved and when?
- e) Is it correct that the ramp is now intended to provide "direct I-395 access" to the WHS site?
- f) Please explain how the proposed ramp will relieve the congestion at Seminary and Beauregard. It is this intersection, and our inability to efficiently dissipate traffic from it, that causes backups in all directions, including back to I-395. How does feeding yet another lane of traffic from I-395 into this already failing intersection in any way relieve the congestion? It appears the consequence of the problem is being addressed as opposed to the cause itself.

2. Concern: EA scope issues.

Questions:

- a) Has VDOT now concluded that building more roads and widening I-395 is the best solution to our congestion?
- b) Why is VDOT apparently refusing to consider (seemingly less expensive and appreciably more impactful) transit "solutions" to our congestion. Is this not our transportation department as opposed to simply a roads department? What are we failing to understand?
- c) Why did it take so many years to form the "task force"? What precisely will it be doing? Does transit remain off the table? Is this a forward-focused group or simply an autopsy on how we arrived at this point? Do they have specific objectives, responsibilities and delivery dates? If so, of what, by whom and by when?

3. Concern: Ramp-HOT Lanes Issues/Questions:

- a) Why would the HOT lanes and the proposed Seminary ramp not be viewed as very inter-related aspects of addressing congestion on the I-395 corridor? Does NEPA not require that the "cumulative impact" of the action and "foreseeable future actions" be considered together?
- b) What is the logic of terminating the HOT lanes ("dumping the traffic") essentially at Duke Street?
- c) Has the City evaluated the impact of dumping the HOT lane traffic at Duke? What actions have they taken to address the inevitable increase in traffic through local neighborhoods?
- d) Given that the "abandoned" HOT lane miles (Duke to the 14th Street Bridge) logically had the highest revenue per mile, what financial ramifications are there to the State from not constructing these miles? Will some form of compensation now have to be paid to Fluor/TransUrban.

September 7, 2011

Consistent with Seminary Hill Association, Inc.'s (Seminary Hill) longstanding position, as reflected in Seminary Hill's RESOLUTION OPPOSING ANY AND ALL NEW OR INCREASED ACCESS FROM ANY AND ALL LANES OF I-395 TO SEMINARY ROAD EAST (attached), adopted 22 February 2011 and subsequently supported by a vote of the Alexandria City Council on 22 February 2011, I vehemently oppose consideration of any BRAC access option that includes new or increased access to Seminary Road EAST. There is no benefit of such an option to the City of Alexandria or its residents, nor would it provide access to BRAC. Rather, such an option would only serve to harm our neighborhoods and quality of life irrevocably, inviting cut-through traffic throughout Seminary Hill neighborhoods, as well as many other neighborhoods.

Sincerely,

Joanne Lepanto
4009 North Garland Street
Alexandria, VA 22304

Received From Gant Redmon September 8, 2011

I see that VDOT is only studying to Howard Street on the east. I live in the 3800 block of Seminary Road.

The one-lane bottleneck at Seminary and Quaker should also be included. Addition of a hot right lane from Seminary to S. Quaker would ease the backup which inevitably occurs when only one vehicle wants to go east on Janney's Lane.

Generally, from my experience at that intersection, there are 8-10 cars that want to turn right to each wanting to go straight across. All 3 other entrances to the intersection have 3 lanes, allowing for a right turn not impeded by the vehicles that want to go straight across the intersection.

I've already made this point with Rich Baier of T&ES for the City. No response from him yet, however.

Best regards,

Gant

GANT REDMON
MANAGING PARTNER
REDMON, PEYTON & BRASWELL, LLP
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2011-09-08

Received From Nancy Jennings September 10, 2011

The scope is flawed because it does not consider enough alternatives and would result in a structure that will preclude a quality future solution—such as a rebuild of the old intersection infrastructure to a more efficient one.

Please add the following impacts to this scope for inclusion in the EA:

- Traffic—on Seminary Road west between Beauregard Street and the Fairfax County line (Fairbanks, Fillmore, Dawes). This is already at gridlock and likely to be exacerbated by a ramp as commuters go to Skyline and Baileys Crossroads.
- Traffic—at the intersection of Beauregard and King Streets. This intersection is a known problem and the most likely route for commuters going to Shirlington.
- Environmental—on the tree canopy on Seminary and Strawberry Hills.
- Safety—drivers using the top level of the Seminary Road interchange (will they be able to stop at the light?)
- Safety—pedestrians using the top level of the Seminary Road interchange (how will the sidewalk work?)
- Safety—terrorist access to the Army building
- Drainage—how much additional runoff would the ramp generate and how will that runoff effect flooding in the area.
- Economic—loss of property values to residences on Van Dorn Street between Seminary Road and Sanger.

Nancy R. Jennings
2115 Marlboro Drive
Alexandria, VA 22304

The following Seminary Hills Association, Inc. Resolution was attached to the above comments from Nancy Jennings:

Seminary Hill Association, Inc.

**RESOLUTION OPPOSING ANY AND ALL NEW OR INCREASED ACCESS
FROM ANY AND ALL LANES OF I-395 TO SEMINARY ROAD EAST**

WHEREAS, VDOT has proposed and the Alexandria City Council has supported the study of "Alternative F," a new reversible ramp from I-395 HOV lanes to the top level of the existing Seminary Road interchange, which would provide access to Seminary Road West toward the BRAC-133 site and access to Seminary Road East into Seminary Hill and adjacent neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the proposed ramp is to provide HOV/transit access to and from the BRAC-133 site and, as such, there is no reason why any new access ramps should be built to facilitate and encourage additional traffic flows through the residential neighborhoods along and near Seminary Road East, and

WHEREAS, such access to Seminary Road East would be open to all vehicles for most hours of the week; and

WHEREAS, such access would provide the only exit from the I-395 HOV lanes between Springfield and the Pentagon, and would be used all day every day by north- and southbound drivers headed to and from countless destinations between Springfield and the Pentagon; and

WHEREAS, on 22 November 2002 the Alexandria City Manager recommended that the Alexandria City Council not support a similar VDOT proposal, based on Alexandria City staff's findings that "access ramps at Seminary Road would result in Seminary Road conveying substantial cut through traffic on its way to destinations outside Alexandria" [City of Alexandria, Virginia Memorandum dated 22 November 2002, to The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council, from Philip Sunderland, City Manager]; and


WHEREAS, on 22 November 2002, the Alexandria City Council adopted the City Manager's recommendation and resolved that VDOT should "eliminate from further consideration the proposed construction of a HOV ramp at Seminary Road, King Street or Duke Street in Alexandria" [Resolution No. 2048]; and

WHEREAS, Seminary Hill Association, Inc. has previously testified before the Alexandria City Council (Testimony of Joanne Lepanto on behalf of Seminary Hill Association, Inc. before the City Council of Alexandria Public Hearing, Saturday, 14 March 2009, Docket Item #9) that (1) it opposes any ramps to or from HOV lanes at Seminary Road East, even if initially designated for limited uses, and (2) that any additional ramps to/from Seminary Road West must be designed in such a way that would not allow vehicles using such ramps to gain access to or from Seminary Road East; and

WHEREAS, on 27 October 2009, the Alexandria City Council adopted Resolution No. 2366, resolving its strong opposition to the I-95/395 HOT Lanes project and declaring that "Seminary Road is a residential street and any access from the proposed HOT/Bus/HOV Lanes onto Seminary Road or into the Seminary Road interchange would negatively impact Seminary Hill communities and adjacent neighborhoods by allowing and encouraging cut-through traffic through Seminary Hill and other residential neighborhoods" [Resolution No. 2366]; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Seminary Hill Association, Inc. vehemently opposes any and all new or increased access to or from any and all lanes of I-395 to Seminary Road East, and respectfully requests that the Alexandria City Council reaffirm its resolve to protect Seminary Hill and adjacent neighborhoods, and request that VDOT remove from consideration the Seminary Road East access ramp in Alternate F and any subsequent proposals for such a ramp.

ADOPTED: 22 February 2011


Nancy R. Jennings, President
Seminary Hill Association, Inc.

Received from Geoff Goodale on behalf of the Brookville-Seminary Valley Civic Association on September 12, 2011:

The Board of Directors of Brookville-Seminary Valley Civic Association, Inc. (BSVCA) respectfully submits these comments for consideration by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) regarding the Environmental Assessment (EA) that VDOT is conducting relating to the proposed High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)/Transit Ramp at the I-395/Seminary Road Interchange (Proposed Ramp). As discussed below, we believe that it is critical that VDOT fully examine the projected environmental and economic costs that would be endured by residents in the surrounding areas if the Proposed Ramp were to be built.

The BSVCA is a non-profit organization whose members include several hundred households in the West End of the City of Alexandria. Given the proximity of Brookville-Seminary Valley to I-395 and Seminary Road, the Proposed Ramp is of great interest and concern to the BSVCA's residents.

Accordingly, we respectfully request that VDOT fully examine and address the following issues when conducting the EA relating to the Proposed Ramp.

1) Study the air pollution effects that each alternative being examined would have on residents living in areas in close proximity to where the Proposed Ramp would be built, including residents living on the Van Dorn Street side of the Proposed Ramp, based on: (1) the existing traffic; (2) the projected traffic based only on specific BRAC-133/Mark Center considerations; (3) the projected traffic based on considerations involving adoption and implementation by the City of Alexandria of a new Beauregard Corridor Small Area Plan in which all requests made by developers are granted (BC SAP)(see website of the Beauregard Corridor Stakeholders Group (BCSG) at <https://sites.google.com/site/bcsgalex/home> for details about the BC SAP).

2) Study the noise effects that each alternative being examined would have on residents living in areas in close proximity to where the Proposed Ramp would be built, including residents living on the Van Dorn Street side of the Proposed Ramp, based on: (1) the existing traffic; (2) the projected traffic based only on specific BRAC-133/Mark Center considerations; (3) the projected traffic based on considerations involving adoption and implementation by the City of a new BC SAP (see BCSG website at <https://sites.google.com/site/bcsgalex/home> for details about the BC SAP). When doing so, identify what the effects in each case would be if there were sound walls and if there were not sound walls.

3) Study the economic effects that each alternative being examined would have on residents living in areas in close proximity to where the Proposed Ramp would be built, including residents living on the Van Dorn Street side of the Proposed Ramp, based on: (1) the existing traffic; (2) the projected traffic based only on specific BRAC-133/Mark Center considerations; (3) the projected traffic based on considerations involving adoption and

implementation by the City of a new BC SAP (see BCSG website at <https://sites.google.com/site/bcsgalex/home> for details about the BC SAP). When doing so, identify what the economic effects in each case would be if there were sound walls and if there were not sound walls, especially taking into consideration the adverse economic effects that have been suffered by the residents of the Lynbrook area in Fairfax County since noise walls were erected in that area.

- 4) Study the cut-through traffic effects that each alternative being examined would have on residents living in areas in close proximity to where the Proposed Ramp would be built, including residents living on the Van Dorn Street side of the Proposed Ramp, based on: (1) the existing traffic; (2) the projected traffic based only on specific BRAC-133/Mark Center considerations; (3) the projected traffic based on considerations involving adoption and implementation by the City of a new BC SAP (see BCSG website at <https://sites.google.com/site/bcsgalex/home> for details about the BC SAP).
- 5) Provide in the draft EA report maps and side views of the impact of the Proposed Ramp from several locations along Van Dorn from Sanger/Richenbacher up to Seminary Road so that local residents can observe what will happen to their views.

Received from Don Buch September 12, 2011:

Questions and Comments
Relating to the Proposed I-395 “HOV Ramp” to Seminary Road

ROADS vs. TRANSIT

1. Context:
 - 1.1. The Alexandria City Council approved the City’s Transportation Master Plan in March 2008, after four years of preparation. Its central focus was/is on the development of high capacity transit and reducing the number of SOVs on the road. That focus continues to be pursued with the current High Capacity Transitway Corridor Work Group developing preferred transit routes and modes.
 - 1.2. The public continues to be barraged with information from all directions, asserting that transit is the answer to congestion – at least roadway congestion – in suburban areas.
 - 1.3. Yet we continue to have our State transportation department seemingly insist that the best solution to the congestion at Seminary Road is to add more roadway. And if we don’t accept their determination and support it, they may just withdraw the funds.
 - 1.4. The many traffic analyses the Beauregard Corridor developers have prepared would seem to clearly indicate that the return on investment is far greater from transit than attempting to pave our way out of congestion.
2. Questions:
 - 2.1. What/who is the community to believe? Is our City on the wrong track? Are roads, not transit, really the way to go?
 - 2.2. Does VDOT not believe in transit?
 - 2.3. We hear that there are incentives available for roads (\$40 million in the case of the ramp). Does the Federal Government not incent transit, only roads?
 - 2.3.1. If they do incent transit, what have the City and VDOT done to pursue some of those incentives/funds?
 - 2.4. Apparently the time to seek transit funds from VDOT is in May when they develop and review their 6 year capital plan. What requests did the City of Alexandria make this year? Last year?
 - 2.5. What is the focus of the new “I-395 Corridor Monitoring Group” the Governor recently announced? Are they only to focus on building more roads? Will transit proposals simply get vetoed in Richmond?

NEPA – GENERAL QUESTIONS

3. Where do specific authorities lie with respect to NEPA?
 - 3.1. The minutes of the (closed door) August 2nd meeting indicate that Mr. Iosco referred to “Federal NEPA requirements as delegated to VDOT.”
 - 3.1.1. Is FHWA not responsible for assuring compliance with NEPA? It sounds as though oversight of VDOT has been delegated to VDOT. (Context: Keep in

- mind that we only recently dealt with VDOT's repeated assurance that a CE was appropriate for this project.)
- 3.1.2. Now, going forward, we are to ask VDOT if what VDOT is doing meets NEPA requirements?
 - 3.1.3. What is the City of Alexandria's reaction to this arrangement?
4. Please explain what the NEPA Documentation Concurrence Form infers when it states that "Section 6002 of SAFETEA-LU may apply to EAs on a case by case basis. The default assumption is that it will not apply to this EA."
 - 4.1. Please explain what common NEPA considerations will be included within the scope of this EA and which ones are specifically not being addressed, irrespective of VDOT's justification for doing so.
 5. Please elaborate on exactly when the draft EA will be available for public review, how the public will be made aware of it and what the expectations of them will be, especially with respect to how, where and by when comments will be due.
 - 5.1. Context: The City issued its response to the BRAC-133 EA including (a) its contradictions of VDOT's warnings about congestion and (b) asserting its agreement with the FONSI, without the public seemingly having any knowledge of the City's actions or positions until many months later.
 6. People in the community have heard terms such as "public input" and "public scoping meeting". Yet, at the September 7th BRAC-133 Advisory Group special meeting, Ms. Collier repeatedly said it is very unusual for the public to be involved at all at this point.
 - 6.1. Please clarify the terms and what comprises "normal" public involvement?
 - 6.2. It sounds as though the public will only (next) be able to comment in mid-December. By that time a great deal of work will have been done and, implicitly, the document will be essentially complete. How realistic is it to expect public comment will truly be considered? The EA will be "a done deal"; can the public really anticipate anything more than explanations (justifications?) for why what VDOT will have done is "right"? Won't it be "too late" to reconsider things? Will we get threatened with unreasonable delays and possibly having the funding withdrawn if we don't simply agree with VDOT?
 - 6.3. Going forward, in future discussions with VDOT, who is representing our City with respect to NEPA-related issues and questions? What is the source and extent of their NEPA knowledge?
 - 6.4. At the current time, does the City have any NEPA-related issues that they believe need to be taken up with VDOT? If so, how, when and in what manner will the community be made aware of those?

PURPOSE and NEED STATEMENT

7. Please clarify an apparent conflict with respect to when "public input" is or is not solicited, desired and/or heard:
 - 7.1. The Purpose & Need Statement was drafted on June 7th; the consultant's "Scope of Services" is dated July 13th; the draft EA is to be completed by November 15th; there will be a public hearing on December 15th at which time "the purpose and needs statement is subject to potential amendment based on comments received..."

- 7.1.1. As noted above, that would imply to many that VDOT really has no plans or expectations of changing a thing – there would seem to be very limited value (or possibility of significant changes) if the public can only comment once the process is essentially complete.
 - 7.2. Despite the above:
 - 7.2.1. The “Citizen’s Guide” says “Citizens who want to raise issues with the agency should do so at the earliest possible stage in the process.”
 - 7.2.2. The Guide also states that “SAFETEA-LU requires the lead agency to provide an opportunity as early as practicable during the environmental review process for the public to weigh in on both defining the purpose and need for a proposal and determining the range of alternatives to be considered.”
 - 7.3. Is one to assume that VDOT believes they are abiding by the aforementioned NEPA guidelines?
8. It would appear that the focus (purpose/need) is misplaced or materially under-stated.
 - 8.1. The Draft Purpose & Need Statement says (the VDOT Access Study) “indicates unacceptable levels of service, substantial delays, and severe traffic congestion at the following locations:
 - 8.1.1. On-ramp from Seminary to southbound I-395;
 - 8.1.2. Off-ramp from northbound I-395 to Seminary Road”
 - 8.2. But that’s only a small portion of the story; in fact, it’s only 18% (2/11ths) of the story. Based upon VDOT’s traffic study of last fall:
 - 8.2.1. VDOT studied 7 key intersections and two peaks a day = 14 key LOS evaluations. At the time of the study (in fact using 2009 numbers) not one of those had an LOS worse than “D”. VDOT’s projections are that, come 2015, we will have four at LOS “E” and 7 at LOS “F”.
 - 8.2.2. Of the 11 failing intersections VDOT is proposing to address but two. And those two are going to feed yet more vehicles into a variety of other intersections that VDOT projects will already be failing even before that additional traffic arrives – the very same intersections that already back traffic up to I-395!
 - 8.2.3. How does VDOT’s proposed ramp realistically reduce congestion on Seminary Road as it funnels yet more vehicles into a number of already failing intersections??
 - 8.3. I would suggest VDOT is addressing the result of the problem, but not the cause; the smoke but not the fire. And the smoke won’t stop until we – or hopefully VDOT – puts out the fire.
 - 8.3.1. I acknowledge that Mr. Fahrney has promised this will be evaluated in detail as part of the EA. We look forward to that analysis as soon as it is completed (hopefully long before mid-December).
9. What additional (non BRAC-related) traffic will be drawn to this HOV exit when it becomes the only one between the Beltway and the Pentagon?
 - 9.1. People going to NOVA, Skyline, Baily’s Crossroads...
 - 9.2. What consideration has been given to additional traffic that will be generated by the extensive new development planned and occurring in the immediate vicinity of the subject area:
 - 9.2.1. an additional +/- 7 million sq ft in the Beauregard Corridor;

- 9.2.2. well over 10 million sq ft in the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor;
 - 9.2.3. as well as in nearby areas (e.g. Plaza at Landmark, Smoot Lumber site, Bailey's Crossroads)?
 - 9.3. What consideration has been given to additional traffic that will be generated by the new HOT lanes?
- We are repeatedly told that it is BRAC's 6,400 personnel that are precipitating the urgent need for the ramp. Can we get some realistic, specific projections of how many "BRAC vehicles" are precipitating the expenditure of \$80 million?
- 9.4. Assuming 20% of the employees will come from the south (per the TMP), 60% not using rail and the Metro shuttle busses (per the TMP), averaging 10 to a vehicle including busses and vans, that then comes to 77 vehicles per day ($6,409 \times 20\% \times 60\% / 10$).
 - 9.5. Add Franconia/Springfield shuttle busses at 6 per hour over 4 hours = another 24 vehicles for a grand total of roughly 100/day over a four hour rush hour = an average of 25 per hour.
 - 9.6. Does that warrant an \$80 million expenditure?
10. Why are the ramp as well as the apparent termination of the HOT lanes essentially at Duke Street not being considered together (per Garrett Moore, July 27th, at Mason District Center) when both are key considerations relating to traffic congestion in a very confined segment of I-395?
- 10.1. Does the City agree with VDOT's position?
 - 10.2. Does NEPA not require that the "cumulative impact" of the action and "foreseeable future actions" be considered together?
 - 10.3. What is the logic of terminating the HOT lanes essentially at Duke Street, dumping (northbound) traffic back into the very congested lanes that the HOT lanes are ostensibly being built to help alleviate?
 - 10.3.1. Has the City evaluated the local impact of dumping the HOT lane traffic at Duke?
 - 10.3.2. What actions has the City taken to address the inevitable increase in (Duke-exiting and entering) traffic through local neighborhoods?
 - 10.4. I would note that the Governor recently formed a task force to monitor congestion on the I-395 corridor as a whole. The focus is not on segmented, implicitly disconnected, pieces but rather, and seemingly logically, on the corridor as a whole.
 - 10.5. The "abandoned" HOT lane miles (from Duke Street to the 14th Street Bridge) were logically some of the very highest revenue per mile of any in the HOT system. What financial ramifications are there to the State from not allowing Fluor/TransUrban to develop these lucrative miles?
 - 10.5.1. Will some form of compensation now be due to Fluor/TransUrban?
 - 10.5.2. If so, how much and when?

WR&A's SCOPE OF SERVICES

- 11. In terms of "public involvement" can you give us some idea of:
 - 11.1. The nature of the "involvement";
 - 11.2. A sense of the timing/dates; how and where the community comments "fit".

- 11.3. Can VDOT appreciate that the community might be less than enamored with a process that might seem to purposely minimize public involvement?
- 11.4. The Secretary's threat that our involvement and questions might jeopardize the funding is not a welcome attitude from "our" government with respect to how they will agree or refuse to use our funds.
- 12. Who decided what the three alternatives to be studied are, those being:
 - 12.1. No-build;
 - 12.2. I-395 HOV Ramp with left turn only at Seminary Road; and
 - 12.3. I-395 Ramp with full access at Seminary Road.
 - 12.4. Is the City comfortable with just these three options being pursued?
 - 12.4.1. Who decided on behalf of the City?
- 13. The noted EA "Products" include "Table for EA identifying resources and lack of impact"!
 - 13.1. That certainly sounds as though someone has already pre-determined that there will be no environmental impact. Is the public failing to understand something?
- 14. Circulation of EA:
 - 14.1. The scope says: "Submit draft for review to relevant agencies..."
 - 14.1.1. What are the relevant agencies and who determines them?
 - 14.1.2. Is the public relevant? If so, how does the public become aware of the availability of the draft?
 - 14.2. Context: It was many months after the City had responded to the BRAC-133 EA that the community first became aware of it and found there were many, very significant, aspects that the community took serious issue with, including:
 - 14.2.1. Blatant contradictions of VDOT's warnings about congestion.
 - 14.2.2. The City's asserted agreement with the FONSI.
- 15. In advocating for a Categorical Exclusion at the BRAC-133 Advisory Group meeting of March 16th, Tom Fahrney, Mike Snare and Keisha Voigt all stressed that an EA takes 12-14 months to prepare and would significantly delay the development process. Now that FHWA has vetoed the CE, we are told an EA can be done in less than three months.
 - 15.1. Why the dramatic change?
 - 15.2. Are we, in fact, now getting a very superficial EA?
 - 15.3. Does our consultant/advisor (Ms. Collier) agree that a quality EA for a project of this size and scope can be prepared in less than three months?

"SCOPING LETTER"

- 16. Can you explain what a scoping letter is intended to do?
 - 16.1. What role can or is the public expected to play?
- 17. Is Robert Iosco's August 9th letter to Abi Lerner the sum total of the "scoping" VDOT intends to do?
 - 17.1. Are "historic properties" the only thing considered?
 - 17.2. Are community comments on the "scope" limited to those relating to historic properties and the eight (actually seven as two are identical) questions provided by Mr. Iosco?
- 18. Despite Mr. Iosco's August 9th letter inferring comments were to be submitted within 30 days, we now understand that those submitted by September 15th will be considered and responded to. (Public comments are to be submitted to the City by close of business on the 12th, for onward transmission to VDOT.)

- 18.1. How will the community be made aware of the City's comments?
- 18.2. To the extent "the City" disagrees with community comments, how do those issues get addressed?
- 18.3. What should the community anticipate in the way of responses from VDOT and from the City?
- 19. According to the Notes from the August 2nd closed door meeting, "FHWA has made the determination...of alternatives being considered."
 - 19.1. Was the City involved? Did they agree?
 - 19.2. Are potential options constrained by needing to know, in advance, where the funding will come from?
 - 19.3. The public has heard of "public scoping meeting(s)". What has been public about this "determination" process?
 - 19.4. Apart from these current submissions, it appears the first opportunity the public will have to actively discuss the matter will be December 15 – a month after the draft EA is completed. It appears this will either be
 - 19.4.1. a waste of the public's time, assuming VDOT has no intention of making any material changes at that late date or
 - 19.4.2. a waste of public money with major changes needing to be made to the EA after considerable work will have been done.
 - 19.5. Why does the public only get "involvement" (using the term loosely) after the game is essentially over? Is that truly how the NEPA process is intended to work?

REACTIONS TO "SCOPE"

- 20. Why is VDOT's response to congestion apparently confined to the building of more roads as opposed to funding "transit" solutions?
 - 20.1. Virtually everything we see, hear and read says the answer to vehicle congestion is high capacity transit. Yet it seems VDOT will only consider laying more asphalt. Why? And why do they seemingly refuse to answer the question?
 - 20.2. Has VDOT now concluded that building more roads and widening I-395 is the best solution to our ever-increasing congestion?
 - 20.3. Why is VDOT apparently refusing to consider (seemingly less expensive and appreciably more impactful) transit "solutions" to our congestion? Is this not our "transportation" department as opposed to simply a "roads" department? Is it not "our" money they are spending? What are we failing to understand?
 - 20.4. Secretary Connaughton's assertion that our funds will only be spent on "the best interchange alternative" is concerning and confusing as is our apparent inability to get any explanation as to why.
 - 20.5. The Secretary's request for a City Council resolution supporting all that VDOT is doing is concerning as is the Council's silence (at least to the community) on the matter.
 - 20.6. The Secretary's threat that we "jeopardize the funding" if we don't fall in line with VDOT and stop raising questions is a troubling way to find our State government addressing a local community impacted to a great extent by the actions and inactions of VDOT.

- 20.7. It was not until the very day BRAC-133 opened that our State Government formed a “task force” to monitor traffic issues on I-395.
 - 20.7.1. Why did it take so many years to form the “task force”?
 - 20.7.2. What precisely will it be doing?
 - 20.7.3. Does transit remain off the table?
 - 20.7.4. Is this a forward-focused group or simply an autopsy on how we arrived at this point?
 - 20.7.5. Do they have specific objectives, responsibilities and delivery dates? If so, of what, by whom and by when?
21. Per “A Citizen’s Guide to NEPA” (page 11): “An EA should include a brief discussion of...alternative courses of action for any proposal which involves unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources.” Is high capacity public transit not one?
22. Alexandria’s transit studies (upon which a great deal of taxpayer money has been spent) include a consistent focus on “Transit Corridor C” as the best way to address congestion in the Beauregard/Seminary/Van Dorn/I-395 area.
 - 22.1. Extensive, thorough and complex analyses by highly-regarded traffic engineering firms confirm this.
 - 22.2. The proposed mode (BRT) is projected to cost appreciably less than the ramp.
 - 22.3. So why are we spending taxpayer dollars on a more expensive, far less impactful project?
 - 22.4. Where is our City government on this issue?
 - 22.4.1. It is noted that the Mayor’s April 8, 2010 letter to Secretary Connaughton focused on finding the “best interchange alternative”. Why only that?
 - 22.4.2. In a City supposedly focused on “high capacity transit” as the best traffic mitigation solution why would we limit the focus only to building more roads?
 - 22.4.3. Why would we voluntarily focus on drawing yet more vehicles to increasingly failing intersections?
 - 22.4.4. Does the City have any reaction to the Secretary’s threat that they must apparently blindly support VDOT’s decisions?
23. Are we correct that \$40 million for the ramp is to come from Federal highway funds?
 - 23.1. Is that not part of our Federal Transportation department?
 - 23.2. Are they, too, committed to roads rather than transit?
 - 23.3. Can they not move taxpayer funds from the road account to the transit account if it makes more sense? If it does not make sense, why can we not at least get an explanation?
 - 23.4. Are there no Federal incentives to develop transit or are the incentives only to build more roads?
24. The challenge is not getting vehicles off I-395; it’s the difficulty in dissipating them from that point. The bottleneck is at Seminary and Beauregard. How does building a bigger bottle (another exit lane) improve the flow through the unaltered but already failing bottleneck?

HOT LANES

25. The Notes from the August 2nd meeting state “TES staff will prepare a letter consistent with the City’s existing position for the Mayor’s signature dated to coincide with the HOT Lanes September public hearing.”

- 25.1. What is “the City’s existing position”?
- 25.2. To what degree has the community been involved in this decision?
- 25.3. Will the community have any input before TES writes the letter and the Mayor sends it?
- 25.4. What September public hearing – where, when, who can speak? How is the City (and/or VDOT) making the community aware of this meeting?

Received from Don Buch September 13, 2011

September 13, 2011

Additional Questions to Those Submitted Yesterday Re:
Questions and Comments
Relating to the Proposed I-395 “HOV Ramp” to Seminary Road

26. Background:

- 26.1. On November 22, 2002, the Alexandria City Council passed Resolution No. 2048 stating “Be it resolved, that the City Council of the City (of) Alexandria, Virginia, requests the Virginia Department of Transportation eliminate from further consideration the proposed construction of a High Occupancy Vehicle ramp at Seminary Road, King Street or Duke Street in Alexandria.
- 26.2. The supporting information provided by the City administration included the following:
 - 26.2.1. “... staff’s review of the VDOT study indicates that the primary destinations of HOV traffic using HOV ramps at Seminary Road were [*presumably were projected to be?*] Crystal City, the Pentagon and Potomac Yard. After further review, it became evident that access ramps at Seminary Road would result in Seminary Road conveying substantial cut through traffic on its way to destinations outside Alexandria. Staff’s further analysis concluded that some of this cut through traffic would filter through the City’s local street network. After many meetings with VDOT staff, City staff could not support HOV ramps at Seminary Road.”
 - 26.2.2. “Since the Seminary Road HOV ramps would create additional cut through traffic on City arterials and would potentially create cut through traffic in our neighborhoods, staff recommends that Council request VDOT not to construct any HOV ramps on Interstate 395 at Seminary Road. We also recommend that the City advise VDOT that the City does not support HOV ramps at King Street or Duke Street.”

27. Questions:

- 27.1. In light of the above, would the City administration/Council now explain to the community what has transpired such that the above matters are apparently no longer of concern.
- 27.2. Is one to conclude that HOV traffic which would exit at Seminary Road would now no longer include numerous vehicles the primary destinations of which are Crystal City,

the Pentagon and Potomac Yard (presumably, now, also including NOVA, Skyline, Bailey's Crossroads and other areas which have continued to develop subsequent to the above resolution)?

- 27.3. If the City administration/Council now concludes that the aforementioned traffic would, in fact, find routes other than Seminary Road to its reach its destination, please provide the source and reasoning underlying that conclusion.
- 27.4. What has the City currently/recently conveyed to VDOT in this regard?

FROM: Julie Edelson, Member - Lincolnia Hills/Heywood Glen Civic Association and
Alexandria City BRAC-133 Advisory Group

6239 N Morgan St, Alexandria, VA 22312

Daytime P/F: 703.354.0365

jedelsonptcie@verizon.net

DATE: 09/12/2011

RE: Proposed HOV/Transit Ramp at I-395 and Seminary Road - Environmental Assessment
Input

I submit the following comments for consideration in the preparation and completion of the draft Environmental Assessment. I support the ramp as an HOV option though I foresee the location and design issues to be challenging and have some potential adverse impacts. However, some design features may mitigate those impacts if the data on which the decisions are made is of good quality.

Ecological – I am concerned that storm water runoff from the ramp will add to the volume of water from Holmes Run (and the Chesapeake Bay watershed) at the lowest point in the terrain, in the vicinity of Sanger Avenue. Over the last 5-10 years, we have had three large rainfall events that have increased the level of backflow on Holmes Run significantly. This is most evident at the Alexandria/Fairfax County line, just south of the Lake Barcroft Dam. Last week with the 6-11 inches of rain, water from Holmes Run flooded the entire parking lot of the Parklawn pool, a good 15-20+ feet above normal water level. It would be important for me to see baseline data reviewing the water runoff directions, volume, velocity and potential design components that mitigate a high velocity, unmanaged flow of water from such an anticipated high (altitude!) ramp.

Aesthetic – I anticipate that the sound impact data may suggest the need for noise abatement walls.

As an Alexandria resident living on the far west end or west of I-395, I am concerned that cement barrier walls will divide the community. As it is, many think that this area is in Fairfax County. If walls are recommended, I would like a consideration for Plexiglas dividers, similar to the walls as you enter Alexandria from Maryland on the Wilson Bridge. Homeowners on Van Dorn Street have always valued their view of the Winkler Preserve. I appreciate the “feel” that the greater density of green provides as you drive through and adjacent to the Beauregard Corridor. Solid walls could hinder or clear walls could support this long lasting community aesthetic. Realize as well, children from my community on the west side of I-395 attend the

middle school on the east side of I-395. Their friends live throughout this region. An effort not to physically divide the community is appreciated.

Social – I am hoping that the ramp provides HOV traffic a specific route while encouraging community traffic through improved local roadways and transit options. The neighborhood traffic is already competing with regional traffic. I hope there is some way to discern what impact improved HOV commutes may have on our local roads (less traffic coming from I-395/Little River Turnpike interchange?). I'd like to see data that elaborates on this impact.

Health – The emphasis of HOV transit access (especially if clean fuel) for the region will ideally reduce emissions which is of value to me. I presently see full length back-ups to the general purpose I-395 roadway on the northbound access ramp to Seminary Road. I would like to see projections of HOV use especially with the options for left only and left/right access to Seminary Road. However, this pertains not only to those getting off at Seminary, but to the delay that already occurs driving up from the Sanger valley and going past this interchange into Washington, DC. I wonder how smoothly all of these vehicles will enter the Mark Center complex or generally clear the Seminary/N Beauregard intersection before it impacts lanes on I-395.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these interests and concerns.

